

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/30/2024 8:12:21 PM

First name: Christopher

Last name: Jones

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Restricting the establishment of new routes to "existing climbing opportunities" on non-Wilderness lands is unenforceable and will create confusion amongst land managers and climbers. Non-Wilderness climbing management policy should maintain opportunities for new anchors unless climbing will impact certain cultural and natural resources. Of course, climbing shouldn't be allowed on sacred Native American grounds except at the Native's permissions, and any resources needed should have restrictions as well. Closing off areas due to animal migration has rarely been a problem amidst the climbing community. USFS is a vast land of management with many cliffs and climbs that can be discovered and developed in ways that do not impact the environment in negative ways. Fixed anchors and climbing route establishment should be viewed similarly to creating a trail for tourists and recreationists. The establishment of fixed anchors does not create nearly as large a footprint on the environment as trail creation does. Managing new established areas with permitting and asking coalitions or climbing preservation organizations to document when existing anchors are replaced will help not only limit wasteful route creation in places few will climb but will as help to keep existing and future areas within guidelines and can keep climbs updated and safe. Making these non-wilderness areas accessible to everyone, through proper permitting channels, can help to expand the wonderful world of climbing, but also help to keep nature remote and pristine and avoid certain areas slowly morphing into a climbing gym-like atmosphere. As someone who has climbed for decades and enjoys peace and time in nature, I too have concerns over the growing popularity and impact of climbing. Instead of preventing growth altogether, perhaps we can find ways to make it so the vast USFS lands can still be accessed and discovered in responsible ways.

Thank you for considering my thoughts.